

BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 2006-89-G - ORDER NO. 2006-320
MAY 25, 2006

IN RE: Application of Piedmont Natural Gas)	ORDER APPOINTING
Company, Inc. to Modify Tariffs and Service)	HEARING OFFICER
Regulations.)	

This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the Commission) on the Commission's Motion to appoint Mr. Joseph M. Melchers, Esquire, Chief Counsel, to serve as a hearing officer in the instant docket regarding the application of Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. (Piedmont) for modification in Piedmont's tariffs and service regulations for natural gas service. This appointment is in order that the hearing officer may dispose of procedural and evidentiary matters pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 58-3-40 (Supp. 2005). The Motion is granted.

Section 58-3-40(C)(1) states that upon the request of any party or any commissioner, the commission may employ a hearing officer who may hear and determine procedural motions or other matters not determinative of the merits of the proceedings. Under (C)(2), the hearing officer has full authority, subject to being overruled by the commission, to rule on questions concerning the conduct of the case and other matters. Under (C)(3), the officer must be an attorney qualified to practice in all courts of this State with a minimum of eight years' practice experience.

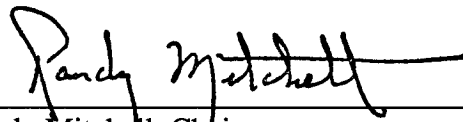
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We find that Mr. Joseph M. Melchers meets this qualification, and we therefore grant the Motion appointing him as hearing officer in this case. As hearing officer in this proceeding, we direct Mr. Melchers to rule on procedural matters in the case.

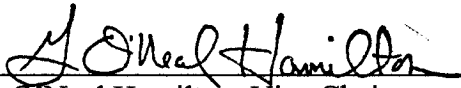
This Order shall remain in full force and effect until further Order of the Commission.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Mitchell", written over a horizontal line.

Randy Mitchell, Chairman

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. O'Neal Hamilton", written over a horizontal line.

G. O'Neal Hamilton, Vice Chairman

(SEAL)